

l'Association  
des médecins  
autochtones  
du Canada



Indigenous  
Physicians  
Association  
of Canada

## **Statement on the Second Anniversary of the Death of Joyce Echaquan**

**September 28, 2022**

Today we honour the life, death and sacrifices of the late Joyce Echaquan. On this second anniversary of her tragic and horrific death, we remain enraged by Quebec Premier François Legault's continuous denial of systemic racism and the way he uses this denial as a tool for inaction and division.

Joyce Echaquan was a 37 year-old mother of seven from the Atikamekw Nation in Quebec. She spent her final few minutes of life listening to racist slurs directed toward her as she pleaded for help. During this traumatic experience, she somehow found the courage to record what was happening.

There is no denying that systemic racism exists in our health, justice, and education systems. The people of Quebec have the opportunity to elect a leader dedicated to fighting systemic racism. We encourage all the citizens of Quebec to make their voices heard during the upcoming provincial election October 3, 2022.

As Indigenous physicians working in various settings including on reserve, in small communities and in large urban hospitals, we hear from Indigenous people that they are often afraid to seek medical treatment. They share examples of unwarranted questioning and tests related to alcohol and drug use, inappropriate and often tragic involvement of social services, and being flat out ignored.

We acknowledge The Government of Canada's commitment to co-developing distinctions-based health legislation informed by the spirit and elements of Joyce's Principle. We call on The Government of Quebec, in collaboration with the Indigenous authorities concerned, to put into place an action plan regarding Joyce's Principle.

Joyce's Principle aims to guarantee to all Indigenous people the right of equitable access, without any discrimination, to all social and health services, as well as the right to enjoy the best possible physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health.

Joyce's Principle requires the recognition and respect of Indigenous people's traditional and living knowledge in all aspects of health.

We call on all leaders to act on the several reports that address systemic racism including the 142 recommendations of the Viens Commission, the 231 individual Calls for Justice in the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Final Report, the 94 Calls to Action in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, the 24 Recommendations of the In Plain Sight Report, and Joyce's Principle.

We send our sincere condolences to Ms. Echaquan's children, husband, family and community and commit to our ongoing anti-Indigenous racism activities as an organization.

#### **The Board of Directors of the Indigenous Physicians Association of Canada (IPAC)**

Dr. Mandy Buss – President  
Dr. Mike Dumont – Vice-President  
Dr. Alexa Lesperance – Executive Member  
Dr. Rebekah Eatmon – Executive Member  
Dr. Ojistoh Horn – Physician-Director  
Dr. Randi George – Resident-Director  
Laney Beaulieu – Student-Director

For more information, contact [info@ipac-amac.ca](mailto:info@ipac-amac.ca)